

The center has led the way in helping individuals with their pension problems and in helping develop and coordinate the country's first nationwide pension information and assistance services for older Americans. The center provides backup legal training and technical assistance for the U.S. Administration on Aging's Pensions Counseling and Information Program. There are now currently six regional counseling projects that provide free assistance to thousands of individuals in 17 States.

The center also has spearheaded the Conversation on Coverage, an innovative public policy initiative that has brought together a wide range of experts—including businesses, unions, financial institutions, and national retiree, women's, and consumer organizations—to find common ground approaches to increasing pension coverage. The Conversation on Coverage's three working groups are in the process of finalizing recommendations to expand pensions and savings for millions of Americans.

The center's work is needed now more than ever. As baby boomers get closer to retirement, it is becoming clearer and clearer that they likely will not enjoy the retirement security that their parents have enjoyed. Younger workers are even more at risk. Many employers are backing away from their longstanding commitment to providing for their workers' retirement security.

Thousands of pension plans have been terminated or frozen and thousands more are considering additional pension cutbacks. The center has always been at the forefront of protecting workers' pensions and in proposing innovative and workable solutions, and their efforts will be all the more critical in the days and years ahead.

I wish the Pension Rights Center, its founder, Karen Ferguson, and the dedicated staff a very healthy 30th anniversary. ●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2320. A bill to make available funds included in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program for fiscal year 2006, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, February 17, 2006, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 1989. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 57 Rolfe Square in Cranston, Rhode Island, shall be known and designated as the "Holly A. Charette Post Office".

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. SANTORUM (for himself, Mr. DODD, Mr. BENNETT, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. LOTT, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. HATCH, Mr. BURNS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. DAYTON, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. BURR, Mr. CRAPO, Mrs. LINCOLN, and Mr. HARKIN):

S. 2321. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of Louis Braille; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 2322. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to make the provision of technical services for medical imaging examinations and radiation therapy treatments safer, more accurate, and less costly; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 2323. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain high-performance loudspeakers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 2324. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain audio headphones; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 2325. A bill to reduce temporarily the duty on certain audio headphones achieving full-spectrum noise reduction; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DOMENICI:

S. 2326. A bill to provide for immigration reform, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ALLEN (for himself, Mr. KERRY, Mr. SUNUNU, and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 2327. A bill to require the FCC to issue a final order regarding white spaces; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 2328. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain synthetic filament yarns; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 2329. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain filament yarns; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 2330. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on certain R-core transformers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2331. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the period for which the designation of an area as an empowerment zone is in effect; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. STEVENS:

S. 2332. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to promote and expedite wireless broadband deployment in rural and other areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. STEVENS (for himself, Mr. INOUE, Mr. BURNS, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. LOTT, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. NELSON of Florida):

S. Res. 382. A resolution recognizing Kenneth M. Mead's service as the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BIDEN (for himself, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Mr. DODD):

S. Res. 383. A resolution calling on the President to take immediate steps to help improve the security situation in Darfur, Sudan, with an emphasis on civilian protection; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 333

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 333, a bill to hold the current regime in Iran accountable for its threatening behavior and to support a transition to democracy in Iran.

S. 370

At the request of Mr. LOTT, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 370, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 779

At the request of Mr. DORGAN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 779, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat controlled foreign corporations established in tax havens as domestic corporations.

S. 910

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 910, a bill to require that health plans provide coverage for a minimum hospital stay for mastectomies, lumpectomies, and